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## EARLY BALKAN MIGRATION

THE geographical configuration of the South-East European Peninsula may serve as key to a whole series of ethnological problems. On the western side of the Peninsula runs the Dinaric Alps, whose direction, parallel to the Adriatic coasts, is indented by a series of longitudinal valleys. Near the bay of Medua the coast line shows a break and now runs from North to South. The Dinaric Alps are blocked southwards by the abrupt and savage chain of the Albanian Alps, or Prokletije. Skutari and Durazzo have their amphitheatre, behind which the Pindus range runs towards Greece. While the two Dinaric and Pindus groups favour the progress of invaders from north to south, the eastern half of the Peninsula presents an entirely different aspect. Its mountain ranges, the Balkans and the Rhodope, run from East to West. If the Western half favours advance on longitudinal lines, the eastern half is more suited to what may be called transversal movements. The former tendency brought the Slavs as far as the Peloponnese, while the Bulgarians, forced by the geography of their mountains to look westwards for an outlet, found the road to Constantinople barred against them. Their advance on several occasions followed the gap between the Dinaric Alps and the Pindus—a gap which allows such rivers as the Neretva, Drim and Vojusa to force their way westwards. This was the road followed by the Visigoths of Alaric, the Ostrogoths of Theodoric, the warriors of Simeon and Samuel. This was the road of every invader coming from the East, who sought to reach the Adriatic.

Between these two regions of the Peninsula—the one with longitudinal, the other with transversal mountain ranges, there is a central region consisting of the Morava and Vardar valleys. The Danube at Belgrade is barely 75 metres higher than the Black Sea. Even at the highest river point between Danube and Aegean—at the two defiles of Kačanik and Preševo—the height is barely 500 metres. A small stream, the Nerodimka, forks into two and sends its waters north to the Danube and south to the Vardar. After Kosovo the valley slowly descends to the Aegean near Salonica.

In the Middle Ages, after the great invasions of the 7th century, the Balkan Peninsula was divided up in the following manner. On the East were two transversal sections—Bulgaria between the Danube and the Balkans, and Eastern Roumelia, the mould

for that amalgam of peoples and races which made up Byzantine unity. On the western side of the Peninsula the Slavs pressed on beyond Salonica to the Aegean, and the Emperor Constans II found it necessary to undertake a campaign "against Sclavinia." The Slavs settled so densely along the coast, that Fallmerayer felt justified<sup>1</sup> in putting forward the theory that on the territory of modern Greece the original Greek element had long disappeared and been replaced by new, completely foreign, elements, above all, Slav in origin, "The Hellenic race in Europe," so he writes, "has been completely annihilated. Its physical beauty, keen mind and simplicity of custom, its art, the palæstra, the luxury of its columns and temples, even the nation's name, have vanished from the Greek mainland. A double layer of ruins and mud left by two different new races, covers up the tombs of the ancient Greeks. The immortal creations of the spirit of Hellas and a few ancient ruins on its native soil form today the sole witness of the past existence of the Greek people. And but for these ruins and tombs and mausoleums, and but for the unhappy fate of its inhabitants, on which the Europeans of our time have expended an *élan* of human compassion, tears and eloquence, one might say that only a vain mirage, a lifeless image had touched the chords of their heart. For not a single drop of true Greek blood flows in the veins of the alien population of modern Greece. A terrible storm scattered over the whole territory between the Ister and the most distant corners of the Peloponnese, a new race akin to the great Slav people. The Slavo-Scythians, the Arnaut-Illyrians, children of the Hyperborean lands, blood relations of the Serbs and Bulgars, Dalmatians and Muscovites, such are the peoples whom today we call Greeks and whose origin, to their own astonishment, we trace back to Pericles and Philopoemon. . . . The Albanian upland shepherds, with their marked Slav features and bushy eyebrows, are assuredly not sprung from the blood of Narcissus, of Alcibiades and of Antinous. It is only a romantic and florid imagination which in our days can still dream of the renaissance of the ancient Greeks, with their Sophocles and Plato."

Today the hypothesis of Fallmerayer is no longer accepted in its extreme conclusions: its true originator, according to N. Petrowski, is no other than Kopitar, the friend of Vuk Karadžić. What still interests us in Fallmerayer is his "Albanian" theory, according to which the Greeks and Slavs who inhabited Greece

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*, Vol. I (1830), pp. iii-xiv. See Vasiliev, *Histoire de l'Empire Byzantine*, I, 231-3.

would seem to have been replaced and subjected by Albanian colonists during the second quarter of the 14th century. It was they who, according to Fallmerayer, gave the first impetus for the Greek insurrection of 1822. He bases his theory on Evagrius,<sup>2</sup> a writer of the 6th century, who says that the Avars had seized "all Greece," and on Constantine Porphyrogenitus,<sup>3</sup> who says that after the plague of A.D. 746 the Peloponnese was "Slavinised and became barbarian." Their assertions do not exclude the survival of the Hellenic element in Greece: the Slavs are very numerous there till the 15th century. Under Turkish rule Greece recovers more and more its Hellenic character.

When, however, we have attributed the east of the Peninsula to the Bulgars and the Byzantines, and the west to a great Slav mass which was organised in the state units of Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia, and even if we assign the south as far as the Peloponnese to a mixture of Greek and Slav such as might threaten the disappearance of Hellenism, there still remains the central district of the Morava and Vardar Valleys. It is there undoubtedly that we must look for the descendants of the Roman provincials.

There have been lengthy discussions as to whether the Roumanians really held during the Middle Ages the country which formed the Dacia of Trajan and is now Roumania. In 1871, when the Roumanians were loud in their complaints at the abolition of Transylvanian autonomy by the Government of Budapest, Robert Roesler published his *Rumänische Studien*, in which he tried to prove that the Roman colonists had completely evacuated Dacia and had taken refuge by order of the Emperor Aurelian in 271 in the western part of Moesia and Dacia, which then received the names of Dacia Ripuaria and Dacia Mediterranea. According to this theory the descendants of the Roman provincials must have lived there till the 13th century, and not till after the collapse of Byzantium in 1204 can the migratory movement have begun which was to bring the Roumanians from the neighbourhood of Salonica to the country which they occupy today. Roesler relies upon Flavius Vopiscus Aurelianus—"cum vastatum Illyricum ac Moesiam deperditam videret, provinciam transdanuvinam Daciam, a Traiano constitutam, *sublato exercitu ac provincialibus* reliquit desperans eam posse retineri, abductosque ex ea *populos* in Moesia collocavit." He also quotes Eutropius (IX, 15)—provinciam Dacian intermisit, vastato omni Illyrico et Moesia, desperans

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Ecclesiastica*, VI, 10.

<sup>3</sup> *De thematibus*, II, 53.

eam posse retineri, abductosque Romanos ex urbibus et agris Daciae in Moesia collocavit—and finally Sextus Rufus.

It has been asked whether the text of these authors would allow us to admit the possibility of a partial evacuation. Iorga, in "Le Problème de l'Abandon de la Dacie par l'Empereur Aurélien,"<sup>4</sup> argues that Aurelian limited himself to fixing the "defensible" zone of ancient Dacia, which he extended and even consolidated, instead of restricting and abandoning it, applying this name to Western Moesia, in honour of Trajan." Densusianu<sup>5</sup> holds that Roesler had "raised the most burning question in the history of the language, and a capital question in Roumanian history." Roesler's theory has been described as too audacious. The partisans of continuity, above all Jung, have quoted the case of the evacuation of Noricum, which was not complete, since in 798 there were near Salzburg 324 houses whose proprietors were "Romani tributales."<sup>6</sup> The opponents of continuity quote the evacuation of Nisibis, as having been complete and compulsory.<sup>7</sup>

Roesler reminds us that the Dacia of Trajan was subject to the Goths (272–375), to the Huns (375–453), to the Gepids (453–566) and to the Avars (566–799). After the Slavs it was invaded by the Magyars, the Petchenegs, the Cumans, the Tartars. Philippide admits<sup>8</sup> that if the Roumanians were able to maintain themselves for ten centuries till the Tartar Invasion, this was a unique, miraculous phenomenon, contrary to every probability. It need not surprise us that the opponents of continuity made full play of this, but they were interested parties, Magyars (notably Paul Hunfalvy, Ladislás Réthy and L. Thallóczy) and Bulgars (Mutafčiev, *Bulgares et Roumains dans l'histoire des pays danubiens*, Sofia, 1932). It is not our purpose to discuss the present state of the question.<sup>9</sup> It is, however, admitted today that the Morava and Vardar valleys were during the Middle Ages inhabited by the descendants of the Roman provincials, and there only remains the question whether the coming of the Wallachs to Transylvania was an immigration (Roesler) or an admigration (Onciul).

The Roumanian question is, however, of great interest not

<sup>4</sup> *Revue du Sud-Est Européen*, I (1924), p. 37–58.

<sup>5</sup> *Hist. de la langue roumaine*. (1901), I, 288.

<sup>6</sup> Eugippius, *Vita Sancti Severini*:—Onnothus vero praecepto fratris Odoacri admonitos universos iussit ad Italiam migrare Romanos.

<sup>7</sup> Amm. Marcellinus, XXV, 9, 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Originea Romînilor*, i, 427.

<sup>9</sup> See Matthias Friedwagner, *Über die Sprache und Heimat der Rumänen in ihrer Frühzeit*, in *Zeitschrift für roman. Philologie*, liv, Dec. 1934, pp. 641–715.

only from the standpoint of the national sentiment of a nation which claims to carry on the traditions of Rome and Byzantium, but also because it forms a valuable point of departure for the Albanian question. It has been found that between the date of the evacuation of Dacia (271) and that of the occupation of Transylvania there was a gap of almost 1,000 years. Now an almost identical gap separates the first data about the Albanians and the starting point of Albanian history as we know it. With one difference which cannot be regarded as negligible, while Trajan's conquest and the organisation of Roman Dacia are incontestable historical facts, a dread uncertainty hangs over the origins of Albania. The name "Albania," "Albans" is very widespread. Alba Longa and Mons Albanus are linked with the origins of Rome. When Pompey led his legions to the Caucasus, he found between Coure and Rhion a series of tribes, with warlike instincts, known as Albans. Their fame still survived in the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and the Imperial author describes in his book of ceremonies the welcome reserved by the Court of Byzantium for the chiefs of these Albans. Are we to suppose that they emigrated from their country and were gradually transferred to Asia Minor, in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, and finally across Macedonia to what is now Albania? If one studies the costumes of the Caucasian peoples, one is tempted to notice striking resemblances both of dress and physical type, especially among the women. There are even certain Caucasian dialects which are called Albanian. A. Schiefer published in 1863, through the Academy of St. Petersburg, a grammar of the Udik language (*Udische Grammatik*); but there certainly seems to be no point of contact between this dialect and Albanian, for otherwise the resemblance would have been noted by Antoine Meillet, who in the last edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* wrote an article on Albanian, and in 1903 published a comparative grammar of classical Albanian.

Thus it only remains to seek the original home of the Albanians by falling back on the indications of Claudius Ptolemy, who mentions in the Peninsula the town of Albanopolis and small groups of Albans. Their exact position, however, is not certain. Hahn<sup>10</sup> and Bopp<sup>11</sup> believe that Albanopolis and Croia are identical. They saw ruins not far from the latter town and thought

<sup>10</sup> *Albanische Studien*, Vienna, 1853, I, 213.

<sup>11</sup> "Über das Albanische in seinen Verwandtschaftlichen Beziehungen" (*Abhandlungen der Preuss. Akademie*, Berlin, 1854).

they might well be the site of Albanopolis. This is not impossible, but it may be asked whether it was not the present position of Albania which was most responsible for the hypothesis of Bopp and Hahn. Tomaschek leans to another theory: he puts Albanopolis east of Salonica, perhaps on the Struma.<sup>12</sup> But may not the name indicate a fortress where Albans, perhaps even Caucasians, were concentrated in relatively recent times? Claudius Ptolemy also mentions Albans, but it is not quite clear where they were located. There is known to have been a group not far from Pécs in the Hungarian Baránya. Jireček even seems disposed to accept their migrating from Pannonia to Dardania (whose capital was Naissus, now Niš) and thence to the Adriatic coast. In short, nothing definite is known as to the original home of the Albanians, or admitting that it really existed, as to an Albania in the Balkan Peninsula. But if we admit Albanian continuity in their present territory, it is certainly surprising that no one between Claudius Ptolemy and the 11th century should have left to us the minutest indication as to the existence of Albanians or of an Albania. This silence is much more astonishing than the corresponding lack of data as to present Roumania. For Roumania lay outside the political sphere and interests of the Byzantine state, whereas a whole series of events took place on the territory of present day Albania between the 2nd and 11th centuries. The passage of the Goths of Alaric and Theodoric, the Slav and Avar invasions, the expeditions of Constans II and Constantine IV, the reigns of Leo the Isaurian and of Constantine Copronymus, the struggles for Adriatic hegemony between Byzantium and Charles the Great, the Arab inroads, the first state-formation round ancient Dioclea, the assaults of Simeon and Samuel, the struggle of Basil II for Durazzo and Ohrida, the Bulgarian risings of 1043 and 1073—all these events took place without a single document or manuscript indicating the existence of Albania or an Albanian.

Michael Attaliatus does, it is true, note the presence of Albanian soldiers (*Ἀλβανοί*), for whom he uses the same designation as does Constantine Porphyrogenitus for the Albans of the Caucasus, in the armies of Maniakes (1042) and of Vasilakes (1078). Attaliatus also uses the term *Ἀρβανῖται* (ed. Bonn, p. 9, 18, 297): but he gives us no indication of the country of these soldiers. The first indications of a country inhabited by Albanians are to be found in Anna Comnena. Its situation can be fixed between Durazzo

<sup>12</sup> Pauly-Wissowa, i, 1309.



and Debra in a very mountainous district, containing numerous fortresses. George the Acropolite, who was governor of the district of Durazzo in the 13th century, speaks of the fortresses of Croia and of the country of Arbanon. Tatel-Thomas (II, 122) quote Latin documents of 1210 in which occur the names Arbanon and Arbanenses. The Turk Balabanbeg bears in 1415 the title of Subasha of Croia and Rabu.<sup>13</sup> Marin S. Drinov is of opinion that Croia and Albanum are two names for the same place,<sup>14</sup> and relies upon the interesting correspondence of the Archbishop of Ohrida, Demetrius Shumatian.

In a letter of John Castriot to the Signoria of Venice, the Albanian prince protests against the assignment of twelve parishes to the Bishopric of Alessio, and claims them for that of Croia and Albanum, which for 800 years has been in possession of their territory.<sup>15</sup> Now it is quite possible that the two places formed a single diocese in the 15th century, but there is nothing to show that the union was permanent. In the *Notitia Episcopatum* of Parthey<sup>16</sup> fifteen bishops are described as suffragans of the see of Durazzo—namely Stephaniake, Honavia, *Croia*, Elisosos, Dioclea, Skutari, Drivaste, Politi, Glavinica, Valona, Dulcigno (ὁ Αὐκινιδῶν) Bar (Antivari), Čerminika near Elbasan, Pulcheriopolis (probably Berat), Gradic (to the east of Valona). No Albanian Bishop is mentioned, and we may note the presence of several Slav names. Now this *Notitia* of Parthey, which ignores the existence of a diocese of Croia and Arbanum and only knows the bishopric of Croia, is earlier than the reign of Basil II (976–1025). To find an Albanian Bishop or diocese, one must go to the 12th century. But this Albanian Bishop who took part in the consecration of the Church of St. Tryphon at Kotor (Cattaro) in 1166<sup>17</sup> was simply the suffragan of the Archbishop of Bar and is named together with a Bishop of Croia.<sup>18</sup> In 1286 we find side by side a Bishop of Croia and a Bishop of Arbanum: and the union of the sees was, in the opinion of Thallóczy and Jireček, carried out after the Turkish conquest.<sup>19</sup> Thus the assertion of John Castriot is

<sup>13</sup> Pucić, *Mon. Serb.* I, p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> *Vizantiiskij Vremennik*, I, p. 332–40.

<sup>15</sup> *Episcopatus Albaniae iam sunt anni octingenti fuerit in terris et contracta sua*—Ljubić, *Vistine*, v, p. 94–5.

<sup>16</sup> *Hieroclis Syneodemus et Notitiae Graecae Episcopatum*, Berlin, 1866, p. 124–5, 220.

<sup>17</sup> Smičiklas, *Codex Diplomaticus*, II, 102.

<sup>18</sup> Farlati-Coleti, *Illyricum Sacrum* (1817) VII, 191–2: Drinov in *Vizantiiskij Vremennik*, I, 333–5.

<sup>19</sup> *Illyr.-Alb. Forschungen*, I, p. 119, and *Archiv für Slav. Philologie*, XXI (1899).



not a proof of the existence of a diocese including both places during eight centuries.

This absence of the Albanian name before the 12th century is all the more symptomatic because we see in the territory of present day Albania, at a period anterior to Basil II, several names of towns or districts obviously inhabited by Slavs, while there is a complete lack of Albanian names. This is all the more remarkable, if we take the trouble to consult the texts of a period relatively recent, but still anterior to the first traces of Albanians in their present home. The chronicler of Dioclea, who ought after all to know something of them, makes no reference at all. When Prelimir partitions his state into four, Hvalimir receives Zeta, Boleslav Trebinje, Dragislav Zahumlje and Svevlad Podgorie. On this occasion the districts, or *Župe*, forming the ancient kingdom of Dioclea, are also mentioned. Zeta is composed of Lužje (Ljeskopolje), Podlužje (Žabljak), Gorska (today the Slav name has been replaced by the Albanian name of Hoti), Kupetnik, Oblik (today Tarabosh), Prapratna, Crmnica, Budva with Kučevo (Tchevo) and Grbalj in the Gulf of Kotor (Cattaro).<sup>20</sup> Even the partition of Dioclea under Voislav about 1050 gives no clue as to the Albanians, and yet it included large portions of present day Albania. It should be noted that the coastal district, during the first part of the Middle Ages, is divided into two parts, the northern being constantly called Sclavinia, while the southern, or Romania, began north of Durazzo or Valona.<sup>21</sup> The name of Albania is entirely unknown before the second half of the 12th century. Since then the geographical term widens, the Angevins, lords of Durazzo, assuming the title of "Kings of Albania" (1272). Towards the end of the 14th the district of Skutari is included in it, and till 1797 the Gulf of Kotor is known as Venetian Albania. This extension of the name in the 14th and 15th centuries forms a striking contrast with the complete absence of evidence for the earlier period. And it must be noted that the Byzantines, far from clinging to historical traditions, give to countries the names of the population inhabiting them. This is shown by the diffusion of the name of Slavonia. The districts occupied in Italy by the Lombards were called, even in the south, Langobardia; and the same applies to Gothia on the Black Sea, and to Valachia, which sometimes means Thessaly, sometimes the territory of Užice, sometimes the plain north of the Danube. The logical conclusion

<sup>20</sup> Chronicle of Dioclea, chap. xxx.

<sup>21</sup> *Illyr-alb. Forsch.*, I, p. 129.

to be drawn from these facts would seem to be that the period up to the second half of the 12th century is marked by a complete absence of any reference to Albania.

Are we to conclude that the Albanians, up to the 12th or even 13th century, lived outside present Albania and only emigrated there later?

The mystery of the origins of the Albanian language has long occupied scholars. It used to be regarded as certain that the Albanians were simply the descendants of the Illyrians, and that their language is old Illyrian in a modern form. Today less categorical views are held, but it is certain that Albanian is of Indo-Germanic origin. Beyond this, however, very little is known. Xilander, Schleicher, Stier, Bopp, Hahn and even Gustav Meyer<sup>22</sup> seem now superseded. Certain inscriptions of Southern Italy have been treated as a proof of Illyrian origin.<sup>23</sup> But doubts have found vigorous expression in the famous study of Hirt,<sup>24</sup> who sees far more resemblance in the Albanian language to Thracian than to Illyrian. Weigand has formulated the objections to the theory of Illyrian origin:<sup>25</sup> to him, the present form of Albanian is only to be explained by a symbiosis, during many centuries, between Albanians and Roumanians. This contact did not take place, as might be expected, in the present Albania, but in the districts bordering upon the Roumanian national territory on the side of Thrace. Weigand was not the first to put forward this hypothesis: far more daring than he, Holgar Pedersen<sup>26</sup> held that Albanian revealed analogies with the languages of the Baltic Slavs and with Armenian. Without endorsing the extreme views of Vasmer,<sup>27</sup> Pedersen sees in the Albanian language, as it is today, traces of having been settled for many centuries in the plains of Thrace.<sup>28</sup>

An analogy which cannot but strike the veriest amateur in comparative philology may suffice to illustrate the hypothesis of Holgar Pedersen. Like the two languages of the eastern half

<sup>22</sup> "Die Stellung des Albanischen in Kreise der indogerm. Sprachen" in *Beilagen zur Kunde der indogerm. Sprachen*, viii, pp. 185, sqq.

<sup>23</sup> S. Bugge in Bezzenger's *Beiträge*, xviii, 193: Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Gesch. der griechischen Sprache*, p. 262.

<sup>24</sup> *Festschrift für Kiepert*, p. 181, etc.

<sup>25</sup> *Balkanarchiv*, iii (1927), p. 231.

<sup>26</sup> *Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der romanischen Philologie*, in Vollmöller, ix, p. 210, etc. and *Albanische Texte mit Glossar*, Leipzig (1895).

<sup>27</sup> *Acta et commemorationes Universitatis Dorpatensis pro* 1921, I, 1, p. 39.

<sup>28</sup> Ebert, *Reallexicon der Vorgeschichte*, I, p. 219-26.

of the Peninsula, Albanian puts the article after the noun (Roumanian, om-ul, carte-a, frate-le; Bulgarian, voda-ta, selo-to; Albanian, ka-u, guri-i, stepi-ja, uje-te). A symbiosis of the three peoples in some part of the Peninsula cannot be relegated to the realm of fantasy: and this of course presupposes the Albanians having lived outside their present territory.

None the less, despite these facts, whose importance cannot be challenged, most philologists are extremely cautious in formulating their opinion. The ground on which they build does not seem sufficiently solid, and on the other hand it is becoming increasingly evident that the old formulas no longer suffice to cover the reality. Antoine Meillet finds in Albanian undeniable Indo-European characteristics, above all in the declination of pronouns, and in certain verbal constructions of a curiously archaic kind (the periphrastic future and conditional). He is struck by the fact that Greek influence in Albanian is relatively sporadic, which must surprise us in a people originating from the Adriatic, where the Macedonian influence and in the Middle Ages the impress of Byzantium were considerable. Meillet finds that Latin influence is much greater than Greek upon Albanian. One might expect some effects of Roman, or Italian, civilising expansion. But it is the Latins of the East, the Roumanians, who seem to have influenced Albanian in a manner intensive enough to determine its present form. Meillet is even of opinion that Albanian was not far from merging completely in Roumanian. Difficult though it may be, according to Meillet, to fix the territory in which this influence was exercised, we must guard against any exaggeration of the Illyrian influence on Albanian. Meillet does not seem to show the same eagerness to exclude Thracian influence.

The impossibility of declaring positively for one or other alternative is brought out by Norbert Jokl,<sup>29</sup> who states the problem as follows: It must first be established whether the ancestors of the Albanians are, or are not, natives of the Balkan Peninsula. If they are, it must be asked whether they are natives of Thrace or Illyria. Each alternative has its champions. To test their value, Jokl considers it necessary to study the links which attach the structure of Albanian to that of the ancient Balkan languages. It will be found that Albanian has ties with ancient Illyrian, but also with Thracian: and it would thus seem justifiable to seek the original home of the Albanians in a region equally distant from Thrace and from Illyria, namely, the ancient

<sup>29</sup> Ebert, *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte*, I, 84-96.

Dardania, round Naissus (the present Niš). Jokl finds confirmation of his theory in Jireček,<sup>30</sup> who, basing himself on the third book of Claudius Ptolemy's geography, believes that the Albanians are refugees from the corner between the Danube and Drave (the Baranja), to Dardania, and thence to the Adriatic coast.

Henry Barić<sup>31</sup> does not regard Jokl's hypothesis as tenable. Jokl's view that Albanian is derived at one and the same time from both Illyrian and Thracian, is impossible owing to the great difference of the two idioms. While admitting that Jokl has proved an affinity between Albanian and Thracian—two languages of the "satem" group—Barić considers that his argument in favour of affinity between Albanian and Illyrian is less convincing, since in the latter case the analogies may, as he contends, be a survival of fragments from pre-Albanian languages in Thracian.

It would be interesting to see whether the derivation of Albanian from Thracian is confirmed by similar analogies in costumes, family tradition and folklore. Certain investigations have actually been made.<sup>32</sup> The legends relating to the Emperor Trajan, the use of the "coteda," the festival of the "rosaliae," common to Bulgars and Albanians, such superstitious beliefs and practices as "Vukodlak," "sjen," and the cult of the snake, give some ground in this direction. But if we once admit such a possibility, we are very near the view that the Albanians were domiciled in the eastern part of the Peninsula before finally settling in their present home: and if the hypothesis of Albanian immigration be once accepted, it remains to fix a period and circumstances under which it took place.

As regards the date, we are unhappily reduced to mere deductions, often of a very laboured kind. What most interests us is to know whether the Albanians came before or after the great Slav invasion. At first sight one might be tempted to believe that they reached the Adriatic later: for there is not the slightest evidence, from any source, of their having served as an obstacle to the invaders from the North. We are thus dependent on mere symptoms and indications. Even the most superficial observer must be struck by the essentially Slav character of the place-names of Albania, in so far as it is not Roman. Since the 10th century its stability is very impressive. Whereas the place-names of neighbouring

<sup>30</sup> *Gesch. der Serben*, I, 152.

<sup>31</sup> *Arhiv za arbanasku starinu, jezik i etnologiju*, II, 151-161.

<sup>32</sup> Dietrich, "Die Volksdichtung der Balkanländer in ihren gemeinsamen Elementen" in *Zeitschr. d. Vereines für Volkskunde*, Berlin, 1902.

regions, such as Zeta and Hercegovina, undergo changes during the 13th and 14th centuries owing to the great Vlach invasion, in Albania there is hardly any change. The Slav names have come down to us unchanged, and even the localities and towns which are not Slav, but either Illyrian or Greek or Roman, have preserved in the Albanian language names which can only be explained by a Slav influence lasting for some centuries. In one of his numerous studies on place-names, Peter Skok<sup>33</sup> gives a whole series of names which the Albanians have adopted along Slav models. The same observation has been made by Norbert Jokl, who points out that the present form of the Albanian name for Skutari cannot be derived from an Illyrian source. Moreover "Durrës," the Albanian name for Durazzo (the ancient Dyr-rhachium) also comes neither from Latin, Greek nor Illyrian, but from the Slav name "Drač." Skok thus concludes that the Albanians cannot have been in these countries at the moment of the arrival of the Slavs. It was from the Slavs that the Albanians took the names of the country where they were to settle. "It is clear," writes Skok, "that this nomenclature is only comprehensible if at the time of the coming of the Slavs, the Albanians were not yet in the town of Durazzo, and that it was the Slavs who first learned the name of the town from the mouth of the Roman population, to hand it on at a later date to the Albanians coming from the mountains."

This appropriation of Slav names by an ethnic element which it is usual to treat as indigenous and as descended directly from the ancient Illyrians, cannot shake our belief in the existence of a national Albania during and even before the great Slav invasion. We are thus reduced to admitting a much more recent date for the coming of the Albanians. But must we really believe that this epoch corresponds with the first appearance of the Albanian name in the 12th century? If this were so, we should be bound to find in the documents of the 12th and above all the 13th century traces of the seniority of the Slav as against the Albanian element. Or again, if as is generally supposed, Albanian is really the indigenous element, and not the Slav, this fact could hardly fail to reveal itself from a thousand little details in the charters of the period. Yet, if we compare sources of the 13th with those of the 15th century, we find that the names of persons in the former century are either Greek, Roman or Slav, and that Albanian names are distinguished by their complete absence. And when in the 14th century Albanian

<sup>33</sup> *Arhiv za arbanasku starinu*, II, 107-121.

names suddenly become frequent, the social position of those who bear them shows clearly that they are recent immigrants.

The case of Durazzo is perhaps the most instructive. The town had fallen in 1205 under Venetian rule, but was speedily conquered by the Despots of Epirus. The names of citizens of Durazzo are preserved for us in several Greek and Latin documents.<sup>34</sup> Among these family names there were between 1205 and 1258 Greek names, some Latin though less numerous, and also a few Slav. It is interesting to note that up to 1250 there is no Albanian name in Durazzo. A complete change took place in March, 1273, after the earthquake. Several old houses were destroyed, hundreds of people were killed and injured, and the sea flooded in. In the mountains round the town there lived Albanian shepherds, whose presence had till then hardly been noticed, but who now raided the town and pillaged it from end to end. It was not rebuilt till 1284, and received privileges from Charles of Anjou, in whose charters the names of the Captain, the Castellan and the town magistrates occur. This time there are among the citizens Greeks, Latins and Albanians, while Slav names are comparatively rare. It is thus possible to argue that the Slav element has been supplemented in the country round Durazzo, by an entirely new element, coming from the mountain districts, and consisting of nomad shepherds who took the first chance of becoming masters of a country till then not theirs.

This Albanian immigration would seem proved by the evidence of two personages who have not enjoyed very great credit, because their views were so obviously inspired by religious motives. The one is the Archbishop of Bar (Antivari), Guillaume Adam (1322-41), a French Dominican and an ardent partisan of the House of Anjou, who wrote for Philip VI of France the project of a crusade against Serbia (*Directorium ad passagium faciendum*), under the pseudonym of Brochard. He expresses the opinion that the conquest of Serbia is not a difficult enterprise, because the Serbs have against them not only the Latins of the Adriatic towns, but also the Albanians, a nation which has great sympathies for the Catholic religion. Guillaume Adam describes the occupations of the Albanians: they are shepherds who wander with their flocks from one mountain district to another. One has the impression in reading him, that the characteristic trait of the Albanians is their instability, and this is still further confirmed by studying the *Anonymi descriptio*

<sup>34</sup> Miklosich in Müller, *Acta Graeca* III, p. 239, and several charters of Dubrovnik in Vols. 3 and 4 of Smičiclas, *Codex Diplomaticus*.

*Europae Orientalis*, published in 1916 at Cracow by the care of Dr. Olgierk Gorka. The anonymous author of this "descriptio" is a Dominican, obviously an agent of the Angevins of Naples, and his aim is to supply information for an enterprise against Serbia. His information is not accepted as reliable, but in my opinion wrongly: if he does not conceal his sympathies, or rather his antipathies, it is clear that he has no interest in giving misleading information, for that would injure the cause which he seeks to serve. He says, among other things, that in the region between Macedonia Achaia and Salonica he has met Vlach shepherds expelled by the Magyars from their original home on the banks of the Danube. From the Vlach country the road to Durazzo passes through a country inhabited by Albanians, fierce warriors who travel at night from mountain to mountain, accompanied by huge and savage dogs. Albania is divided into six districts in which the chief places are Tumurist, Clisura, Cumania, Stophanatus, Polatus and Debra. In this country there is a peasant population subject to the Albanians (*sunt tributarii et quasi servi eidem Albanensibus, quin exercent agriculturam*). In the 14th century, then, there are to be found in the territory of Albania two nationally and socially distinct elements. On the one hand there are agriculturalists living in stone houses, while their masters and lords live in tents and change their domicile during the night. These nomad shepherds speak a language of their own, unknown to the people of the country, that is to say to Greeks, Latins and Slavs. Is it necessary to demonstrate that this language, unknown to the local inhabitants, must be Albanian, and that according to the evidence of this anonymous writer, the Albanians are new arrivals by comparison with the local Slavs?

There are a whole series of minor facts which confirm us in this view. The first data relating to the family of Musachiz in the plain of Saura, date from 1280.<sup>35</sup> At about the same time, in 1290, there are signs of a grave crisis in the social life of the neighbourhood of Skutari and especially Surda, whose church "inter nationes perversas posita est."<sup>36</sup> Sufflay<sup>37</sup> also notes a profound crisis in the situation of the churches of Albania in the middle of the 13th century. The position of the Archbishop of Bar (Antivari), the Primate of Serbia, is seriously menaced. A stubborn struggle

<sup>35</sup> Hopf, *Chronicles*, p. 532.

<sup>36</sup> Theiner, *Mon. slav. merid.*, I, 109.

<sup>37</sup> Die Kirchenzustände im vortürkischen Albanien," in Thallóczy, *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, I, 132, 280.



is in process between Rome and Ohrida for the ecclesiastical domination of central Albania and Epirus.

This crisis corresponds in time with the great emigration of the Vlach tribes, whose phases are recorded in the archives of Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and Kotor (Cattaro). A formidable inroad seems to have pierced the longitudinal dyke connecting the Slavs of Dioclea with those of the Peloponnese, towards the middle of the 13th century. A radical change, a profound upheaval, seems to have occurred in the customs, composition and national and religious formation of the population of these regions. Between the time of Progonos,<sup>38</sup> who was lord of the country south of Skutari, and the middle of the 14th century, the colonisation of the land between the Lake of Skutari and Aspropotamos seems to have taken place. The incessant wars had depopulated the wide plains occupied by a pacific and industrious race and those who profited by this were nomad shepherds accustomed to drive their flocks through mountain districts and ready for war and plunder. We can follow the change pretty closely, thanks to the voluminous correspondence of the Archbishop of Ohrida (1230) and the charters of the monasteries of Visoki Dečani and St. Michael the Archangel near Prizren. In the districts inhabited today by scattered groups of Albanians a numerous Slav population was to be found in the middle of the 13th century. Marino Sanudo, in his famous letter of 1325<sup>39</sup> describes how this population was terrorised by nomads from the mountains, “et ad presens consumunt et destruunt taliter, quod quasi nihil remansit penitus extra castra.” Trade soon felt the effects of this: the once frequented ports of St. Sergius on the Bojana, of Durazzo and of Valona, were silted up with sand. Navigation became insecure owing to the Albanian pirates, who lay in wait for merchant vessels in their small barks hidden near Capes Rondoni or Pali. Soon came the turn of the caravans, and the result was the complete downfall of an ancient civilisation.

Cvijić, in his great work *La Péninsule Balkanique*, had intuitions of this. He has a great admiration for Hercegovina, Montenegro, the districts of Novipazar—“the most active regions of the Peninsula.” But was not this activity the result of the misery into which these provinces were plunged as a result of the upheaval of the 13th century? Cvijić himself found during his wanderings “ruins of imposing buildings which must once have sheltered

<sup>38</sup> Mentioned in the correspondence of the Archbishop of Ohrida, Demetrius Chomatianus, ed. Pitra, col. i.

<sup>39</sup> Tafel-Thomas, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, xii, p. 500.

a pretty advanced population." He finds that the splendid forests of past times have been pitilessly ravaged, and assumes that under such conditions the local population may well have given up agricultural pursuits as too exposed.

Apart from this, there are districts where the ancient Slav population managed to survive. Even in the 14th century the Slavs formed a majority at Opari.<sup>40</sup> The French Consul Lejean notes at the time of Napoleon III the presence of numerous Slav oases not far from the mouth of the Vojuša. In the Musachia the place-names are all Slav. As late as 1880, six centuries after the invasion, the Slavs of Debra brought their herds down to winter quarters on the sea coast. But the most striking result of the invasion is certainly the fundamental change in the social structure. "In the regions north of the Šar," writes Cvijić, "we find a patriarchal organisation, and this also exists further south in the high Rhodope and Pindus. The patriarchal régime is not a backward state: the population which lives under it has high moral conceptions, a slapdash outlook upon life, a very definite social and economic organisation, very solid institutions, an altogether special æsthetic sense, which finds expression in poetry and the decorative arts."

This patriarchal régime was native to the Slavs in their original home north of the Carpathians and developed after their immigration to the Peninsula. It grew weaker under Byzantine influence and state authority, only to resume its old vigour under Turkish rule. There was thus a kind of regeneration of the old social structure: the old social customs were revived. This new régime differed from the old above all among the Serbs, among whom the long experience of the Middle Ages left more or less profound traces. Left to itself, the patriarchal population took on vigorous new forms, and acquired new outlooks and feelings. Its moral evolution was far freer and more spontaneous than among the Slavs subjected to German influences. What most strikes us in the patriarchal organisation is its social and economic form. There are tribes (in Albania, the *fis*) in Montenegro, in certain districts of Novipazar, in northern Albania, both among Serbs and Albanians. The "Zadruga," i.e. the family communal system—exists throughout the central and western parts of the Peninsula, among Serbs, Croats and Albanians: it disappears wherever the Greeks begin, and it does not exist at all among the Bulgarians and Turks. It is found in the Lika, in Croatia, in Syrmia, owing to the immigrations to those districts in Turkish days.

<sup>40</sup> Hopf, *Chronicles*, p. 280.—il paese d'Opari, ch'è habità dei Schiavoni.

Connected with this tribal and family system are forms peculiar to the material life and psychology, and these affect the healthiest and freshest sections of the Balkan peninsula. The centre of this civilisation is in the districts formed by Montenegro, Brda, Hercegovina and North Albania. Here has been preserved, alike among Serbs and Albanians, the conception of tribes, clans and families, and the institution of the vendetta. These are most prolific tribes, possessed of great vital energy, and for the most part devoted to stock breeding. They are proud and vigorous men, sinewy, tall, light and elastic in their movements, with expressive and well developed faces—the handsomest race in the whole Peninsula. In these districts there are no degenerate types. Their moral sentiment and spirit of sacrifice and devotion is admirable. They offer a profound contrast to those populations which underwent Byzantine influence. This difference is best seen by contrasting the natives of northern Albania with the Tosks of the south, in whom there is a Greek and Vlach element.

There is no doubt that Cvijić has reproduced with much verve and plastic vigour his personal observations, and that he found great satisfaction in discovering high moral and physical qualities among individuals and communities which he regarded as representing the early organisation of the Slavs in their primitive home. It is certainly interesting that such phenomena are to be traced in the districts which separate the Dinaric Alps from the Shar and Pindus ranges. When we set ourselves to contrast the social conditions of the countries which have not been affected by the great transversal invasion with those that were affected by it, we are driven to the view that Cvijić's results, though deserving very serious consideration, are not so convincing as regards the national individuality of those who founded the patriarchal régime. The same criticism applies as regards the period at which the patriarchal régime was restored. Cvijić attributes the change to the Turkish conquest, while the data collected from the archives by Jireček show that the true representatives of this régime were the Vlach and Albanian tribes who moved from the centre westwards in the 13th and 14th centuries, in other words, before the Turkish conquest.<sup>41</sup>

The change in social and economic structure described by Cvijić operated at another period and in distinctly different circumstances: this was the result of the infiltration of a new ethnical

<sup>41</sup> "Die Wlachen und Maurowlachen" in *Berichte der Kgl. Böhm. Akad. der Wiss.*, Prague, 1879.

element against which all resistance was vain. For it must not be supposed that this territory, so important as a bridgehead of Byzantium towards Italy, was abandoned to the conqueror without any defence of its ancient civilisation. From one end to the other of the territory now regarded as the domain of the Albanian people, the urban communities united in a common defence and tried to prevent the settlement of Albanians. The watchword, *Μὴ προσοικίσω Ἀλβανίτας* is heard not only at Pteleon in Thessaly,<sup>42</sup> but also in communes which today are so completely Albanian as Valona, Canina and Berat. It was on condition of being set free from the Albanian invaders from the mountains, that these communes abandoned the cause of the Despot of Epirus and espoused that of Byzantium in 1330. This opposition to the Albanians makes itself felt at Skutari also, and even at Drivaste. When this town submitted to the Venetians in 1442, the latter had to promise that they would not admit in the territory of the town either Albanians or other strangers.<sup>43</sup>

It is difficult to concede that a population which has been settled in its present home for at least 2,000 years—and this is the current opinion of the Albanians—should not have been able to establish some *modus vivendi* between country and town. But this difficulty becomes much more explicable if we accept the view that the Albanians were immigrants, or rather invaders, whose coming, far from being welcome, was destructive of the ancient prosperity of the Roman towns which the Slavs had respected. The result of this reasoning is favourable to the hypothesis which treats the Albanians as having immigrated from the central or even eastern districts of the Peninsula.

It only remains for us to fix the historical framework of this immigration. That some Albans of the Caucasus, as loyal and courageous soldiers, were introduced on several occasions in the countries bordering upon the northern invaders, is not improbable : from Trajan right on till Abdul Hamid Caucasians have been brought in from Asia through the intermediary of Constantinople. It is also possible that the name “Albanian” was not a national one, but served to designate, without distinction of language or origin, a whole class of people engaged under stipulations similar to those employed towards the Albans of the Caucasus. These Albanians who guarded the frontiers towards Bulgaria were assigned more distant tasks after the victories of Basil II (976–1025).

<sup>42</sup> Miklosich-Müller, *Acta Graeca*, v, p. 260.

<sup>43</sup> Albanenses vel alios forenses—Ljubić, *Listine*, ix, p. 158.

They form the nucleus of the troops which took part in the various pronunciamientos of the 11th century. It was the Norman danger which imposed the necessity of employing them in the country round Durazzo and Valona, and it is possible that Alexius Comnenus installed the first batch of Albanians in Albanum, not far from Croia. It was Manuel Comnenus who in 1166, after the Norman invasion, fixed the status of these Albanians and their relations with the Roman population of Croia.

After the death of Manuel I (1180) and the great Vlach-Bulgar insurrection of 1185, the situation of the Albanians—living it would appear in the Struma Valley—became unstable. It was the Fourth Crusade which gave the signal for their departure westwards. The Crusaders having first seized Constantinople in 1204, pushed on towards Salonica, where they founded the ephemeral kingdom of Boniface of Montferrat. The Byzantine troops, in whose ranks there undoubtedly were Albanians, found themselves driven back towards Epirus, where a centre of resistance was formed in the territory of the former Theme of Durazzo. The first movement was followed by a mass immigration, after the defeat of the Epirotes at the Battle of Klokotnica in 1230 and perhaps also after the Tartar invasion of 1241, which separated the northern Vlachs or Wallachs—the Roumanians of today—from the southern Vlachs who in the 14th century invaded Thessaly, Zeta and Hercegovina and penetrated as far as Istria. Driven back from the centre of the Peninsula, the Albanians saw themselves obliged to seek new homes in the gap between the Dinaric Alps and the Pindus. They met in this territory three populations who were living side by side. That of the countryside were Slav, grouped round monasteries which were for the most part Benedictine. That of the towns was Roman in the north, mixed with Greeks to the south—Catholic in the Roman towns, Orthodox in those further south. While the Slavs in the open country could not resist invaders, the Romans and Greeks held out till the Turkish invasion, which brought with it the last influx of Albanians, who had meanwhile passed over to Islam. It is under the Turkish conquest that the territorial unity of Albania was achieved.

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